

King County Fire District 41

Commissioners Jim Lloyd, Chair, Richard Krogh and Toby Nixon

March 8, 2011

Proposed new Finn Hill fire station

Summary

The proposal for a new fire station on Finn Hill is part of a strategic plan to improve response times for fire and emergency medical calls, save money and bring service up to national standards.

The new station would consolidate service areas and replace Stations 24 and 25. Station 25, located at 12033 76th Pl. NE, was built 50 years ago when Finn Hill was more rural and less developed. Now, the station is too far south and west to meet desired response times for east Finn Hill and the north part of the fire district. Due to financial concerns, Station 24, at 8411 NE 141st St., is currently staffed only at night by volunteers.

Topography and existing buildings and homes limit the options available to improve response times. Fire District Commissioners originally looked at surplus property at Finn Hill Jr. High School but steep slopes and wetlands caused projected construction costs to be \$4.5 million and the site was not pursued.

Commissioners grappled with three options: do nothing and continue with longer response times; pay the higher costs at the Jr. High School site; or find a lower cost alternative in the same area. Last year the Commissioners began an initial investigation into the feasibility of a station in a corner of Big Finn Hill Park at Juanita Dr. NE and NE 138th St. Given the time and work already done on the Finn Hill Jr. High School site, commissioners wanted to make sure the new potential site was viable before beginning a community dialogue. The Kirkland City Council, the Denny Creek Neighborhood Alliance and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance were briefed on the potential proposal in 2010.

Commissioners are considering a potential partnership with King County Parks in which a new fire station would be built on 1.8 acres of Big Finn Hill Park at NE 138th and Juanita Dr. The station would include 20 parking spaces the county had planned for park users but could not afford to build. Currently, trail users have to

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park across the street at QFC or in the east parking lot at the ball fields. The rough construction estimate at this site is \$3.5 million.

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